

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7878
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SUBJECT: THE "BRIEFING PAPERS LEAK"

REF: STATE 148503, STATE 149430

1. SUMMARY. BRASILIA'S CORREIO BRAZILIENSE AND JORNAL DE BRASILIA REPORTED JUNE 11 ON THE "SECRET DOCUMENTS" IN WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER REPORTEDLY REQUESTED DIPLOMATIC ASSISTANCE FROM BRAZILIAN AND VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENTS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF CUBAN TROOPS FROM AFRICA (REFTELS). RIO DE JANEIRO AND SAO PAULO DAILIES WERE SILENT UNTIL JUNE 13, WHEN ARTICLES ON TOPIC APPEARED IN ALL MAJOR BRAZILIAN NEWSPAPERS. END SUMMARY.

2. NEARLY IDENTICAL ARTICLES IN THE TWO PRINCIPAL BRASILIA DAILIES DISCLOSED EXISTENCE OF ALLEGEDLY "SECRET DOCUMENTS" IN WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER DURING HIS MARCH TRIP TO BRAZIL AND VENEZUELA REQUESTED THOSE TWO GOVERNMENTS TO USE THEIR DIPLOMATIC INFLUENCE TO OPPOSE SOVIET INFLUENCE AND CUBAN MILITARY ACTIVITY IN AFRICA. CORREIO ALONE NOTED THAT DOCUMENTS WERE OBTAINED BY UPI. ACCORDING TO BOTH ACCOUNTS, PRESIDENT CARTER ALLEGEDLY ACCEDED TO SUGGESTION OF HIS FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISERS, WHO WERE CONCERNED OVER CUBAN ACTIVITIES DURING ETHIOPIAN-SOMALI CONFLICT OVER OGADEN REGION. DOCUMENTS REPORTEDLY REVEALED THAT PRESIDENT
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CARTER REQUESTED BRAZIL TO USE ITS INFLUENCE WITH PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING AFRICAN COUNTRIES. WITH REGARD TO VENEZUELA, DOCUMENTS ALLEGEDLY INDICATED THAT THE ADVISERS ASKED PRESIDENT CARTER TO IMPRESS UPON PRESIDENT PEREZ THAT CUBAN SUCCESS IN AFRICA WOULD ENCOURAGE SIMILAR INTERVENTIONS IN LATIN AMERICA, WHERE CUBA HAD BEEN ACTIVE IN 1960S.

3. AFTER ONE DAY OF SILENCE ALL MAJOR BRAZILIAN NEWSPAPERS CARRIED REPORTAGE JUNE 13 ON DOCUMENTARY DISCLOSURE, ALTHOUGH ARTICLES DIFFERED AS TO COMPLETENESS. JORNAL DE BRASILIA REPORTED CATEGORIC DENIAL BY GOB FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN LUIS FELIPE LAMPREIA THAT QUESTION OF COMPELLING CUBA'S WITHDRAWAL FROM AFRICA EVER AROSE DURING DISCUSSION BETWEEN PRESIDENTS CARTER AND GEISEL, ALTHOUGH THE TWO PRESIDENTS DID EXCHANGE POINTS OF VIEW CONCERNING EVENTS IN AFRICA. JORNAL DE BRASILIA THEN QUOTED A "FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCE" TO THE EFFECT THE US DIPLOMACY WAS OFTEN MORE AGGRESSIVE AND US PERSPECTIVES DIFFERENT THAN THOSE OF THE GOB BECAUSE OF THE FORMER'S SUPERPOWER STATUS AND ROLE AS "WORLD POLICEMAN".

4. RIO'S JORNAL DO BRASIL (JUNE 13) CARRIED MOST COMPLETE COVERAGE ON DISCLOSURE, REPORTING WASHINGTON AND CARACAS REACTION AS WELL AS GOB DENIAL. ARTICLE BY N.D. SPINOLA CITED HODDING CARTER'S JUNE 12 STATEMENT THAT DOCUMENTS WERE SIMPLY "REFERENCE TEXTS, WHICH DO NOT REPRESENT OFFICIAL AMERICAN POLICY OR POSITION". EVEN WITH BOTH GOVERNMENTS' OFFICIAL DENIALS, SPINOLA TIED THE CONTROVERSY TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S PRESS SECRETARY JODY POWELL'S BRIEFING OF PRESS CORPS ACCOMPANYING PRESIDENT CARTER ON LATTER'S TALKS WITH PRESIDENT GEISEL. FROM THIS BRIEFING, WROTE SPINOLA, "IT APPEARS EVIDENT THAT PRESIDENT CARTER TRIED TO OBTAIN FROM BRAZIL AN ALIGNMENT SIMILAR TO THAT WHICH UNCLASSIFIED

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HE PROPOSED TO OTHER COUNTRIES AND WHICH RESULTED IN INDIRECT (US) ASSISTANCE TO THE BELGIAN-FRENCH ACTION IN ZAIRE". JORNAL DO BRASIL ALSO COVERED CONTROVERSY OVER VENEZUELAN PORTION OF DOCUMENTS. INTERESTINGLY, RIO'S O GLOBO AND O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO (JUNE 13) IGNORED BRAZILIAN ASPECTS AND REPORTED ONLY ON VENEZUELAN PART OF DOCUMENTS' ALLEGED REVELATIONS.

5. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED SURPRISINGLY FEW OUTSIDE REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION OF SITUATION. THOSE WHICH WERE RECEIVED HAVE BEEN REFERRED TO GOB FOREIGN MINISTRY.
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